

REMARKS

The status of all claims is indicated in the above LIST OF CURRENT CLAIMS. Claim 1 has been canceled and claim has been amended to merge the language of claim 1 into claim 3.

Claim 3 was indicated as allowable by the Examiner provided that it was rewritten in independent form, including all of the intervening limitations. However, the intervening limitation of claim 2 does not appear to be necessary in order to distinguish claim 3 over the cited prior art. In passing, claim 3 has also been amended to delete the expression "dimensioned and" in line 3, because this is considered to be an unnecessary limitation and is inherent in the word "configured" in the same line. Accordingly, it is requested that the Examiner reconsider the basis for allowance of claim 3 and acknowledge that the claim as presently presented is fully allowable over the cited prior art.

Claim 2 has been amended so that it refers now to amended and presumably allowable claim 3.

Claim 4 has been amended to merge the language therein of claims 1 and 2, thereby presenting the claim as an independent claim including all intervening limitations. Accordingly, it would appear that claim 4 is in allowable condition.

The remaining claims in the application have been amended to be dependent from an appropriate prior claim and from a claim that has been indicated as allowable.

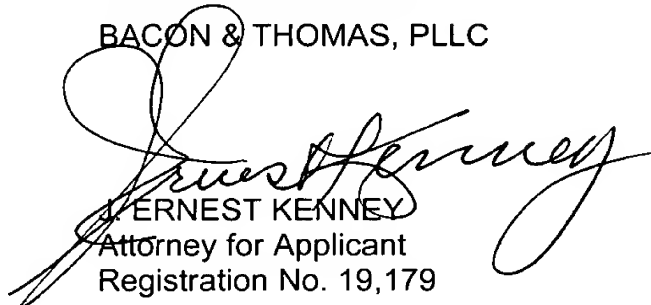
It is respectfully submitted that the application has been placed fully in condition for allowance and a notice of same is respectfully requested.

To complete the record, it is acknowledged that Ishikawa U.S. 5,733,335 discloses an elastomer gel containing microballoons as a filler, as explicitly described in column 7, lines 10-15. However, Applicant does not concede to the Examiner's statements with regard to the inherent properties of Ishikawa corresponding to claimed properties of the composite elastic material described and claimed in this application.

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The claims have been amended to obtain early allowance of the application in view of the indication of allowable subject matter.

Respectfully submitted,
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